

makes sense to put someone on the federal bench who understands this important law because she helped write it and implement it.

Mr. BIDEN. When she was attorney general, she helped write it.

Mr. HARKIN. She can help make sure that the law lives, that the Violence Against Women Act is enforced by the courts by being on the Eighth Circuit. Yet she is being held up here. I will tell you, it is not right. I hope when we take up the Violence Against Women Act, which I hope we do shortly, I will have more to say about this sort of split personality that we see here. They say: Yes, we are for the Violence Against Women Act, but, no, don't put a woman on the circuit court who is widely supported, who has headed this office and did it in an exemplary fashion.

I thank the Senator.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I understand the passion the Senator feels. It is particularly difficult to go through this kind of thing when it is someone from your home State being so shabbily treated. I empathize with him. I might say parenthetically, Bonnie Campbell—and we are not being colloquial calling her Bonnie. People might be listening and saying, well, if this were a male, would they call him Johnny Campbell? Bonnie Campbell is what she is known as. So we are not making up pet names here. This is Bonnie Campbell.

This is a woman who has been an incredible lawyer, a first-rate attorney general in one of the States of the United States. She has run an office that, at its inception, didn't have a single employee, didn't have a single guideline, didn't have a single penny when she came in. She has done it in a fashion, as the Senator said, that the ABA thinks she is first rate. Coincidentally, this will cause controversy, but we seem to hold up people of color and women for the circuit court. They tend to get slowed up more than others around here. It simply is not right. This is a woman who is as mainstream as they come, who is well educated. If anybody has a judicial temperament, this person has it.

Mr. HARKIN. Absolutely.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I will join the Senator in whatever way he wants, as many times as he wants. I can't say enough good about Attorney General Campbell, and I have known her for a long time.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 3107

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I understand that S. 3107, introduced earlier today by Senator GRAHAM of Florida, is at the desk. I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3107) to amend title 18 of the Social Security Act to provide coverage of outpatient prescription drugs under the Medicare Program.

Mr. BIDEN. I now ask for its second reading and object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington is recognized.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, what is the business before the Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. S. 2045.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business, using such time as I may consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PIPELINE SAFETY IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2000

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, earlier this afternoon, the distinguished chairman of the Commerce Committee, Senator MCCAIN, and my distinguished colleague, Senator MURRAY, and I believe others on both sides of the partisan divide, came to the floor to speak about the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2000. That bill was passed by the Senate unanimously. It resulted from a broad, bipartisan coalition that worked over a period of more than 1 year here in the Senate. It was sparked by my colleague and myself as a result of a terrible tragedy—an explosion in a gasoline pipeline in Bellingham, WA, that snuffed out the lives of three wonderful young men, destroyed a magnificent park, and left physical damage that will be years in repair.

No individual involved in this debate got every single element in that bill that he or she wished. Liquid and natural gas pipelines are vitally important to the Nation and the transportation of fuels.

Some thought renewal of the act would be somewhat weaker than the present statutes. Others, myself included, wanted considerable strengthening, particularly with respect to local input into the way in which such pipelines are managed in communities near homes, schools, parks, and the like.

The net result, however, is a pipeline safety renewal that is a considerable and significant improvement over the present act. There will be more notice. There will be more severe penalties. There will be greater opportunities for local comment and local participation.

But in spite of all of this work, in spite of the passage of this bill, little is happening in the House of Representatives.

The Bellingham Herald, the daily newspaper in the community subjected to this tragedy, pointed out just a lit-

tle bit more than a week ago that the passage of the Senate bill means nothing if it is not passed by the House.

Almost immediately, however, after the passage of the Senate bill, a number of Members of the House of Representatives began to place roadblocks in the way of the passage of the Senate bill, claiming it wasn't strong enough and it didn't do this, or it didn't do that, or it didn't do something else.

The House of Representatives has had exactly the same opportunity to deal with this issue as the Senate.

After a brief hearing a month or so after the accident took place, literally nothing at all took place in the House of Representatives. Many of us here were led to believe that if the Senate bill were passed in its ultimate form, it would be taken up and easily passed in the House of Representatives—until these last-minute critics began to point out what they consider to be the facts.

Talk is cheap. But talk doesn't create safer pipelines in the United States. Those who oppose this bill have proposed nothing with the remotest chance of passage by the House of Representatives, much less the Senate of the United States.

We have only a short time left. Those who criticize the bill as being too weak would do far better to pass the reforms that we have and attempt to build on them later than to destroy a bill which, if it does not pass within the next few weeks, will have to begin its process all over again next year, with highly questionable prospects.

Believing that accomplishment is better than demagoguery and that a bill beats oratory any day, I come here to join with both Republican and Democratic colleagues to plead with the Members of the House of Representatives to take up the Senate bill, to debate it to the extent the House wishes to do so, and to pass it so we can get it signed by the President and enacted—which, incidentally, I am confident would take place if the House were to pass the bill.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I wish to speak on a subject in a happy vein.

Yesterday, the President sent a letter to the Speaker and to our majority leader on the subject of prescription drugs. In that letter he said:

I urge you to send me the Senate legislation to let wholesalers and pharmacists bring affordable prescription drugs to the neighborhoods where our seniors live.

That proposal was passed by the Senate a couple of months ago as an amendment to the appropriations bill for the Department of Agriculture. It was sponsored by my colleague from Vermont, Senator JEFFORDS, and by Senator DORGAN of North Dakota on the other side of the aisle, others, and